

A
L E T T E R
T O A
F R I E N D;

Giving a concise, but just

A C C O U N T,

According to the

Advices hitherto received,

O F T H E

OHIO-Defeat;

A N D

Pointing out also the many *good Ends*, this
inglorious Event is naturally adapted to
promote :

O R,

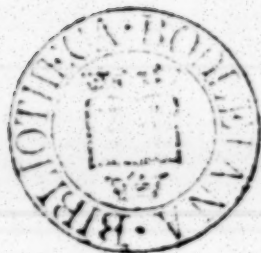
Shewing *wherein* it is fitted to advance the
Interest of all the *American British Colo-*
nies.

To which is added,

Some general Account of the *New-*
England Forces, with what they have al-
ready done, counter-ballancing the above
Loss.

BOSTON, printed: BRISTOL, re-printed by
EDWARD WARD on the *Tolzey*, 1755.

[Price Six-pence.]





A

LETTER

Relating to the

O H I O-Defeat.



S I R,



S you live at a distance from the
feat of news, and may know no-
thing of the *Obio-Defeat* but from
heresay-reports, which, having
passed through a variety of hands before they
have reached you, must be very uncertain,
and mixed with a great deal that is not
true, I have been at the pains, for your
gratification, to put together, from the best

A 2

accounts,

accounts, the whole of what may be depended on for fact, in relation to this interesting affair to all the *British American* Governments : And if I should hereupon add a few thoughts, tending to point out to you *wherein* this defeat, however inglorious to itself, is yet naturally and powerfully adapted to serve these Colonies in the end, it may give some relief to your anxious mind, and dispose you to wait, with a becoming submission, the issue of those military operations which are but just begun.

The first news of this defeat was brought us in a letter from Col. *Innes*, dated *July 11th*, in these words, “ I have this moment received the melancholly news of the defeat of our troops, the General killed and numbers of our officers, our whole artillery taken. In short the account I have received is so very bad, that, as please God, I intend to make a stand here. It is highly necessary to raise the militia every where to defend the Frontiers.” It at once appeared to every one, from the general air and strain of this letter, that the aged *Colonel* was under the influence of a strong panic when he wrote it, for which reason we were disposed to hope, that matters were not so bad as he had suggested ; and by after contradictory accounts we were encouraged in this hope,
till

till the *second* of this instant, when, upon the arrival of the western post, it was put beyond all doubt, by a variety of Letters, that the *Okio-reincounter* was on our side, every way as disadvantageous as we were at first led to conceive it to be.

By comparing the accounts we have hitherto received, it appears, “ that the
 “ *General* proceeded from the little mea-
 “ dows with about 1300 Men, mostly
 “ *British*, besides the necessary artillery,
 “ ammunition, and provisions, leaving the
 “ main body of the convoy under the care
 “ of Col. *Dunbar*, with orders to join him
 “ as soon as possible; that on the 9th of
 “ *July* the *Monongakela* was passed first by
 “ 300 Men, then by 200, then by the *Ge-*
 “ *neral* himself with the column of ar-
 “ tillery, baggage, and main body of the
 “ army, about one o’Clock; that immedi-
 “ ately upon this a quick and heavy fire
 “ was heard from the front; that the de-
 “ tachments of the 2 and 300 men gave
 “ way, and fell back in great consterna-
 “ tion upon the main body, who were
 “ hastening to sustain them; that this
 “ struck the men with such a panic, and
 “ brought on such confusion as could not,
 “ by any expedients, be afterwards reme-
 “ died; and that in consequence of this,
 “ notwithstanding the courage and resolu-
 “ tion

“ tion of the officers, the enemy obtained
 “ a compleat victory, killing and wound-
 “ ing a great many,* and obliging the rest
 “ to quit the ground, leaving behind them
 “ the artillery, ammunition, provisions, and
 “ the whole baggage.”

The number of the enemy remains still somewhat uncertain. One of the officers writes, “ it was impossible by the disposition of the *French* and *Indians* to judge of their number.” Another is pretty certain, “ that they did not exceed above 3 or 400.” A gentleman from *Philadelphia* of good intelligence says, “ by the best accounts there were about 400 *Indians* and 80 *French*.” I am inclined to think, they were not much more numerous; for if they had, they would probably have cut off the whole army, as they had so great an advantage against them, and fired, not in the *European* way, but by *taking aim*, in which method of firing the *Canadians*, as well as *Indians*, are very dexterous.

But whether their number was great, or small, they made sad havock of our men. Perhaps, all circumstances considered, history will scarce furnish an instance of such
 a dread-

* At the lowest computation, between 6 and 700 foldiers, officers and private men, were killed, or wounded, besides pioneers, waggoners, servants, &c.

a dreadful carnage. To be sure, the like was never before seen in *North-America* : Nor could it have happened, humanly speaking, without great misconduct, either in the officers, or soldiers, or both. Some are pleased to lay the blame on the *soldiers* ; speaking of them as *cowards*, and as leaving their officers to fall a sacrifice to the enemy. Others seem to think, the *chief commander* was rather principally faulty in not using due caution, and a prudent forecast, to guard the men against a surprize which involved them in destruction.

It does not come within my present design to enter upon an enquiry into the *blameable source* of this mischief ; though you will unavoidably perceive my opinion about it, by reading what I have to offer with respect to the *tendency* of it *finally* to serve the interest of even all the *British American Colonies*.

I readily own, this defeat, in many respects, is a *terrible evil*. Great dishonour has been reflected on the *British* arms ; --- the *Indians* will be more strongly attached to the *French* than ever ; --- the *French* are inspired with greater courage and resolution, while, at the same time, their strength is very much increased by the artillery, ammunition, and stores, brought by us, within
in

in 7 miles of their fort, at an immense expense of labour and money: Besides all which, our *southern Colonies* are thrown into perplexity and confusion, and lie doubly exposed to the depredations of the *savages* of the wilderness.----But these things notwithstanding, it may be best, in the *end*, we have met with this loss. Shameful and mischievous as it is, it may be one of the grand links in that chain of causes, by which Heaven may intend to chastize the *French*, curb their insolence, drive them out of the encroachments they have made on us, and reduce them to a necessity of keeping within their own boundaries without disturbing us in the possession of ours. These, I would hope, are the *beneficial consequences* aimed at by providence: Nor, as I imagine, could any thing have happened more naturally and strongly adapted to bring into effect such happy events.

'Tis too evident to be disputed, that the *southern Colonies* needed something EXTRAORDINARY to rouse them out of that *deep security** they were unhappily sunk into.
Had

* I very justly speak of them as in *deep security*; for though it was the greatest part of a year from the time of Colonel *Washington's* defeat to the arrival of General *Braddock* in *Virginia*, yet they had not raised so many as 1000 men to join the troops from *England*; which we, in these parts, can attribute to nothing but their being

Had they had a just sense of their danger from the *French*, who were settling and fortifying on their back-lands; had they in time wisely concerted, and vigorously executed, measures for driving them off, they might easily have done it, and at a comparatively small expence. It was unaccountable inattention to their own safety that brought them into those circumstances, which gave rise to the embarkation of troops from home, and a greater national charge following thereupon than has ever been expended upon the *northern Colonies*, from their first settlement to this day. And the destruction of these troops, in so striking a way, accompanied with such loss and disappointment, is eminently fitted to alarm their fears, awaken in them a sense of danger, and constrain them to speed and vigour, in prosecuting methods, both for guarding *themselves*, and annoying the *French*. And should it operate to the production of these good effects, as it naturally tends to do, the damage in the *end*, would be more than counter-ballanced: For there are more than 40 *Englishmen* in the southern settlements to one *Frenchman*; and where the

B dispro-

being, to an high degree, *careless* and *secure*: Especially when we consider, that this is not one fifth part of the men that have been raised in the *Massachusetts-Province* only, in a much less time, though they were not under the like necessity.

disproportion is so great, they must be capable, under a common blessing, of putting it out of the power of the *French* to do them any harm, † unless they are madly resolved to continue careless and inactive; which cannot well be supposed after the late occurrence, so powerfully suited to excite in them a becoming concern for the security of their liberties and properties. ‡

Our

† *Pennsylvania* only contains more inhabitants than the Province of the *Massachusetts*. And it would be strange, if that Province, with *Maryland*, *Virginia*, and the two *Carolinas*, were not vastly more than a match for the comparatively few *French*, who are such bad neighbours to them. Had we, in *New-England*, no settlements and fortresses behind us superior to those on the back of them, we should esteem ourselves quite safe, not thinking we had any thing to fear from the *French*, though we had no assistance from *Great-Britain*.

‡ One would have thought it could not be supposed, but that the *southern* Colonies, by what has happened among them, should have been excited to an immediate care for their own safety; but we hear, to our very great surprize that *Maryland* and *Virginia* have done nothing as yet; that *Philadelphia* is in a wrangle about the method of supplying money; and that *New-York* have revoked their vote to raise 400 men, though they had forwarded this vote to the *Massachusetts*-Government: Upon which I would only say, they are in a more *profound sleep* than I imagined; but I doubt not, they will be thoroughly roused, when they find, that the people in their out-settlements are killed, or captivated, or obliged to retire into the heart
of

Our *southern* brethren, it must be acknowledged, have not been used to *military* expeditions. The sooner therefore they are put upon them the better : For their being used to them will, I believe, be found the ONLY STABLE FOUNDATION upon which, under the smiles of *Heaven*, and the well conducted assistance of *Great-Britain*, they may expect to hold their possessions without molestation from the *French*. And providence may be opening the way for THIS STABLE FOUNDATION by the present *evil event*, the rather adapted to this purpose, because so *extraordinary* in its circumstances. The steps by which it leads hereto are easily discernable, though they may be thought tedious and burdensome, They will by means of this disaster, be more liable than they ever were before to the incursions of the *Natives*, set on and strengthened by the perfidious *French* ; this will put them under, what I may call, an happy necessity of raising considerable numbers of men to protect the Frontiers, and scour the Woods ; this will inure their men to hardships, and insensibly teach them the art of war, as it ought to be carried on in a *wilderness-land* : and, in consequence of these things, they will soon have within themselves a power

B 2

suffi-

of their country for safety, as will soon be the case, and the sooner for their present carelessness, and to their far greater cost.

sufficient for their own defence, and capable of being employed offensively too, as there may be occasion.

This is the way in which the *northern* Colonies have had numbers of men, from generation to generation, trained up for war, and inspired with martial courage disposing them, with all readiness, to go forth against the enemy, whether *French*, or *Indian*, or *both*, as they have been called thereto. And were the *southern* Colonies, in the same way, formed for military exploits, it would be an easy thing, with comparatively little help from home, wisely conducted, to drive the *French*, not only out of their encroachments, but out of these parts of the earth. And perhaps this may be the view of providence; and the *Ohio-defeat* may be one of the grand steps leading to it, by alarming the *English* Colonies, the *southern* ones in special, and putting them upon the acquirement and exercise of martial skill and valour, even from necessity.

This defeat has an obvious tendency also to answer another very good purpose, it may be, the most important of any in order to success in our attempts against the *French*; and this is, the effecting an alteration in *some material articles*, as they respect the *military power* that may be employed to this end.

It

It has been thought necessary, that the *chief Command* should be lodged in a *British* Officer of known courage and experience in the art of war as practised in *Europe*. This gave rise to the appearance of *General* — in *Virginia*, as *Head* of all his Majesty's forces in *North-America*. And to this, I believe, it may principally be attributed, that we met with such ill success on the banks of *Monongabela*. Not that I question the personal valour of this gentleman, or his military skill in the regular way : But he had no idea of the *manner of fighting* in use here, and therefore wholly neglected the only effectual expedients to guard against the fatal consequences that arose from it. It does not indeed look very likely, that a stranger to the country, and one altogether unacquainted with its warlike methods, which are known to be quite different from what they are in *Europe*, should be the best qualified person to have the chief hand in planing, and executing, the hostile schemes necessary for our protection and security. The present melancholly event is, all circumstances considered, surprizingly calculated to give instruction and warning upon this head : Nor, after such dear-bought experience, is it probable we shall again have our first military officer from home. Or should this be still thought necessary, we may reasonably hope, he will be so restrained as
not

not to have it in his Power to act, but with the advice of some thoroughly experienced *American* actually present with him. Had the *General* been thus restrained, 'tis morally certain, he would not have been so shamefully surprized and beat. It does not appear that he wanted good advice; and some are of opinion, that if he had hearkened to it, not holding those in too great contempt, who, though inferior to him in regular military skill, were yet better acquainted with the methods proper to be used with such an enemy as he had to engage with, he might have been alive at this day, and in circumstances to have forced *Du Quesne* out of the hands of the *French*.

The *American provincial* troops, the *New-England* ones in particular, who have exposed themselves to hardships and hazards for their King and Country, and by their bravery done eminent service for both, may have been too much neglected, I mean in those *appointments* which are the proper reward of military merit. The Regiments upon the establishment ordered to be raised this year, in these Colonies, were so supplied with *British* officers, that room was left for only here and there one of an *American* descent; and perhaps room would not have been left even for these few, had it not been a necessary expedient in order to the

the filling up of the regiments. Nor is this the first time, that as brave men as any in the world have been treated with like neglect. 'Tis well known, *New-England* gave peace to *Europe*, not many years ago, by the valour of their men in reducing *Cape-Breton*; and yet, these very men were strangely overlooked in the appointment of officers for the two regiments that were raised, even from among themselves, for the securing that important acquisition; that is to say, *New-England* men did all the service, both in taking and keeping this strong fortress, and one and another from *Great-Britain* were put into *most* of the posts of honour and profit, to the exclusion of those who had merited them, and were, without any reflection, as well capable of filling them. A different conduct seems necessary, if any thing is ever intended to be done to good purpose against the *French*, in these parts of the world. And the late horrid slaughter of *British* officers, as well as private soldiers, may have a tendency to bring it about. It is certainly adapted to such a purpose. For it is now made manifest, and in a way that cannot fail, one would think, of convincing even all *England*, that neither *British* officers, nor private soldiers, without *American* assistance, can be depended on for success against *American* enemies.

Had

Had the General been opposed by *French regulars* only, he would probably have met with little interruption in his progress; but, as he had to do with the *Canadians* and *Indians*, who fought in a way he was an intire stranger to, he soon fell a prey into their hands: Nor would numbers have served him; they would only have given occasion for a more horrible slaughter of men. The plain truth is, *regular troops*, in this *Wilderness-country*, are just the same that *irregular ones* would be in *Flanders*. *American irregulars* would easily be confounded by *regular troops* in the *open fields* of *Europe*; and *regular troops* would be as easily reduced to the like confusion by *American irregulars* in the *woods here*.

I would not be understood to mean by what I here say, as though we did not need *regular troops*, or could not make use of them to good purpose. For, as *France* has sent over a considerable number of their *regulars*, it is highly proper there should be *regulars* to oppose them; and, in laying siege to their fortifications, *regulars* are the fittest to be employed: But, as there is no way of marching to the *French fortresses*, or to their *regulars*, either in, or out of them, but through the *American woods* and *thickets*, the best *regular troops* that could be sent us would, without all doubt, be attacked
in

in their march ; and should this be the case, they would probably be soon destroyed, or obliged to retreat with loss, not being skilled in the *only method* of fighting that would be of any real service to them. The General's defeat is a practical instance that must forever silence all dispute upon this head.

And what is more naturally and obviously deducible herefrom than this, that *American irregulars*, in an *American* war, are full as necessary as *British regulars*. And if *American irregulars* are thus necessary, it must be evident, at first sight, that it will argue the want of policy, if that is done which has a *direct tendency* to cool their zeal and damp their spirits ; and this most certainly will be done, if they are obliged to see regiments raised, upon the *British establishment*, even among themselves, with so many officers appointed from home, as almost wholly to exclude them from being sharers in any thing that is either honourable or profitable. If one of the good effects following upon the *Ohio-defeat*, so inglorious to the *British* arms, as well as hurtful to their interest, is not a greater care to distinguish *American* merit, it will not be because it is not, in all respects, fitted to point out the political wisdom of such a conduct :

C

Nor,

Nor, unless such a conduct should be consequent thereupon, can it reasonably be expected, that any military attempts will be carried on here with that resolution, vigour, and spirit, which are necessary.

I may pertinently add to what has been hitherto said, it is possible some of the *rules and articles for the further governing his Majesty's forces*, given out the last year, extending to *America*, and the *troops* serving here by *commission only from the Governors of the several provinces*, would not have run exactly in their present form, if the importance of these troops, in an *American* war, had been so thoroughly considered *then*, as it probably will be *now*. Perhaps, upon this supposition, it would not have been thought absolutely necessary to be so explicit in saying, "that the general or field-officers of the *provincial* troops shall have *no rank* with the general and field-officers who serve by commission from us ;" or, that "the captain and other inferior officers of the *British* forces shall, in all duties, *take post* of the *provincial* officers of the like rank, though their commissions should be of *elder* date." Such a distinction, so formally made between *British* and *provincial* officers, however just in itself, may, in present circumstances, be of great disservice, and certainly will, should it
it

it unhappily prove an occasion of jealousy, disaffection, and contempt, in these officers towards each other.

The subjection also of the *provincial* troops to *courts-martial*, “ in like manner with the officers and soldiers of the *British* troops, when acting in conjunction with them,” may probably tend to render the enlistment of soldiers a much greater difficulty, than if they were left to be tryed conformably to the laws of the Provinces to which they belong. For it is to be considered, nine in ten of the men, who must compose our *provincial* troops, in any important expedition, if to be depended on, are such as go upon *principle*, from loyalty to their King, love to their country, and a just concern for the welfare of their families, and the security of their liberties and estates ; and these are the men that would be most startled at the thought of being subjected to *martial-law*, as practised at home : Nor would they easily be persuaded to come under such subjection.

The unhappy event that has lately taken place in *America* is well fitted to convey to the *mother-country* just ideas of what is proper to be done here ; and it will accordingly, as we may reasonably trust, be produc-

tive of those determinations, which shall, in the best manner, tend to support the honour of the *provincial*, as well as *British* troops, and give them all the weight and encouragement that can be desired.

You are satisfied, I believe, by this time, that the *Ohio-defeat* is naturally adapted to serve the *American English* Colonies in the end, however grievous it may be for the present: Though I should not do justice to *New-England* in general, and the *Massachusetts-Province* in particular, if I did not suggest my fears, least, by means of this disappointment, they would be subjected to *one very great hardship*, unless his Majesty, in his paternal wisdom and goodness, should do that which will, in a good measure, prevent its being so. To explain myself here.

New-England in general, and the *Massachusetts-Province* in special, are the chief, I may say the only, sources that may be relied on for a supply of effective men to carry into execution any future designs against the *French*. There are no men in the *American* Colonies so well qualified, or spirited, as these to engage in war-like enterprizes: And this is so well known, that the *other Colonies*, as well as *Great-Britain*, have their expecta-

expectations mainly from us. The danger therefore is, lest our men should be called into military service beyond our *ability*, as well as *proportion*. This indeed is the case at present. The *Massachusetts*-government only has more men employed in the several expeditions now on foot, than all the other Colonies put together. One full *eighth* part of our people (the flower of them too) are in active service at this day, and a greater number of them in *our own pay* than when we undertook the reduction of *Louisbourg*. Such, in truth, is the spirit reigning in the *Province*, that every *third* man, I believe, would be in readiness, upon very short warning, to engage in an *enterprize I could name*, if put upon it, and duly encouraged in it. It is therefore obvious, at first sight, that, in the present situation of affairs, *we* shall be *singularly* liable to have our men taken off from their labour in their respective callings, the effect whereof will be the rise of all the necessaries of life; an incapacity to pay those taxes, which are already *tribled* upon us; and, what is still worse, the stopping our *growth* for twenty or thirty years, by the loss of our young men, either by death, or their going where they will be exposed to fewer hardships, and less charge.

It

It is in the power of his *Majesty* to prevent, in a great measure, these inconveniencies, I do not mean by not calling upon us for our men ; [this, considering the present *temper* and *character* of the *southern* Colonies, may be necessary] but by employing them at the charge of the *crown* ; at the same time, making us the *special* object of his *paternal regards*, in proportion to our greater zeal and activity in the defence of our *Sovereign's* rights against the *French encroachments*.

It does not seem equitable, that *this Province*, because more loyal and active than the other Provinces, should be drained of its men, and burdened with a weight of charge beyond what we are able to bear. We may, I think, reasonably expect all proper care will be taken to guard against this : Nor otherwise will it be long in our power to be of any service, either to his *Majesty*, or the other Colonies under his dominion. We shall sink under the burden that is laid upon us, and unavoidably fall into ruin.

I cannot help observing here, though *this Province* has been the *Grand Barrier* to all the *American Colonies* for more than an hundred years, and has, in that time, expended immense sums of money, in the wars

wars it has carried on with the *French*, and *Indians*, for the *common* good, as well as its own; yet it has never received the least help, in respect either of men, or money, from any of the *southern* governments: Nor has the *mother-country*, in all that time, made them a *donation* of so much as *one thousand pounds*, so far as I remember, to assist them in their *own proper defence*: Which we take the more hardly, as we have been publicly told, that no less a sum than *ten thousand pounds sterling* was given the last year to *Virginia*, (and without their asking for it) to encourage them in their attempts against the *French* at *Ohio*; while yet, this is the first time they have been called to any difficulty of this sort, or put to any charge worth mentioning. Were we, in *this Province*, to meet with *proportionable encouragement* from home, we should not think much of any thing we might be called to for the *common* benefit of the *American British Colonies*.

I believe, Sir, you think it high time I should come to a close of this letter; but I must beg your patience, though I may already have trespassed upon it, while I mention to you *what* our *New-England* forces have done this summer for the service of his Majesty, and turning the scale in favour of the *English*, notwithstanding our loss at *Ohio*.

Let

Let me then congratulate you upon the reduction of all the *French forts* * at *Nova-Scotia*, and *St. John's River*. In some complimentary addresses to the *Governor of Halifax*, *NEW-ENGLAND* was kept so intirely out of view, that a stranger would have guessed, that *British* troops only had merited the honour of this exploit: Whereas the plain truth is, it was done by two regiments (of a thousand each) sent from *New-England*, with the assistance only of two or three hundred of his Majesty's *regular* troops. This could not well have been disguised, even in a compliment, if a *New-England* officer had had the *chief command*, as we were universally led to expect. How the matter came to be otherwise ordered, I presume not to say: But thus much is certain, the *honour* of *New-England* was not thereby advanced, nor the most likely step taken to promote his Majesty's service in
future

* One of these *forts* was much stronger in its make than *Du Quesne*, and defended with more and heavier cannon; and our troops, while bombarding it, and at work in preparing to cannonade it, were attacked from the woods, by perhaps as great a number of *Indians* as surprised and defeated our army at the *southward*. And what was the effect? Our *New-England* men, instead of being affrightened by the *Indians* yelling, and standing as *marks to be shot at*, while they could do them little or no hurt, took them in their own way, bravely followed them into the woods, and soon obliged them to retreat, without ever attempting again to give them the least disturbance.

future enlistments. I have no view in what I now say to suggest the least reflection on Col. *Monckton*; for, by all accounts, he is every way equal to the place he holds, and has behaved excellently well in it: But it must be thought reasonable, that *New-England* should have had the honour of a *Chief-Commander* from among her own sons; especially as it is known here, that they enlisted upon this supposition, and would have been persuaded up on no other.

I need not observe to you the importance of these acquisitions in *Nova-Scotia*. They are alone a full counter-balance to our loss at the *southward*; and you will easily be disposed to think so, when I have told you, that the *Neutral-French*, as they are called, are, by this means, intirely subjected to our command. And accordingly transport-vessels (they having refused to swear allegiance to his Majesty GEORGE our gracious Sovereign) have been taken up, and sailed from hence, to carry them out of *that part of America*, and to place them in *others* where they may be less dangerous and troublesome. I suppose, by this time, *Nova-Scotia* is emptied of its *French-inhabitants*, and thereby secured to the *British* crown more effectually than ever. How galling must this be to *France*! What a vast disappointment! when she doubtless expected the *reverse* of all this, as

D

she

she had sent over so great a number of troops, and with a design to accomplish *that* on *her side*, which we have done on *our's*.

We thankfully ascribe it, under the smiles of providence, to the seasonable arrival of Admiral *Boscawen*, with so powerful a naval force, that the *gallic scheme*, so far as it related to *Nova-Scotia*, has been intirely defeated. And such has been the vigilant and prudent conduct of this *brave Commander*, and such the distresses arising herefrom to a *certain place*, that it might, perhaps, should permission be granted, be soon put into *English* hands, to the intire ruin of the *French* interest in *America*.

I do not think I shall be too hasty, If I congratulate you also on the *virtual* or *constructive* conquest even of *Du Quesne* itself on the *Ohio*, in what Major General *Shirley*, our Governor, has already done to cut off the communication between *Canada*, and that *fort*. I own, I was not without pain, when I knew his *excellency* was going in person upon the *Niagara-expedition*, and with no more than about 2500 men, as it might reasonably be expected the *French* would be alarmed at an attempt to take from them the *grand Key* to all the Lakes, and whole Country extending to the *Mississipi*; and my fears were heightened upon the advantage
the

the General's defeat would give them, the more powerfully to oppose him. But, by the wise and timely care of his *Excellency*, the *English Oswego-fort*, upon the margin of the south-east part of lake *Ontario*, was so enlarged and strengthened as to discourage a thousand *French* and *Indians* from making an attack upon it; though they were collected together, near the fort, for this purpose: --- Besides which, *He* has for some time had, through the laborious diligence of a number of *New-England* carpenters, well guarded and defended while at their work, three well armed vessels cruizing in the *lake*; and by this time two more are built, and joined with them; which make a very formidable squadron for a small *sea*, as *Ontario* may be called, though detached from the *Ocean* between two and three hundred miles at the nearest distance. And, by means of this squadron, he has it in his power to prevent an attempt against *Oswego* by canonading or bombarding, without which it will be an easy thing to hold it against any number of *French* and *Indians* that can be brought to take it. And by this squadron also he has rendered it impracticable (as may be seen by only looking on a map of this part of *America*) for the *Canadians* to convey artillery, ammunition, or any other stores, for the defence of their encroachments on the back of our southern

Colonies. Fort *Du Quesne* must, for this reason, soon fall into our hands, and without much trouble, besides what may be called for in watching the *lake*.

Had the General made it his first business to secure the command of lake *Ontario*, which he might easily have done soon enough to have stopt the force that was sent from *Canada* to *Du Quesne*, that fort must have been surrendered to him upon demand; and had he gone this way to it, greater part of that vast sum might have been saved to the nation, which was expended in making a waggon road, through the woods and mountains, the way he went. Why he went this way I presume not to enquire; much less would I say, that he was above thinking any plan of operation could be better than his own.

It is impossible to determine at this distance, whether his Excellency General *Shirley* will directly endeavour the reduction of *Niagara-Fort*. He is wise, and cautious; and will, I believe, do nothing upon this head, under present circumstances, unless there is the utmost probability of success. It would not give me any concern, if he should make no immediate attempt upon this fort. For as he has now got the command of lake *Ontario*, the *grand point* is gained.

gained. The *key of communication* is in *English* hands ; and if a good use is made of it, the consequence must be the intire destruction of the *French* interest on the back-parts of our *southern* Colonies, in a little time, and with little pains.

As to our *Crown-Point* expedition, its effect is still altogether in the womb of providence ; though it might have been determined long ago, and in our favour, humanly speaking, had not a delay been rendered unavoidable, by the obligation which was laid upon Governor *Shirley* to go to *Maryland* [a curious specimen, among other things we have seen, of the signal advantage of the lately proposed *Union* of the *Provinces*] to settle with the General the plan of action for the summer. This affair has now been so long in hand, and so much opportunity hereby given the *Canadians* to employ even their *whole power* to oppose us, that I am not, I freely own, without fear what may be the consequence. The troops from *France*, not intercepted by Admiral *Boscawen*, may, before this time, be posted in the most advantageous situation for the defence of that place : And should this be the case, our *New-England* men may be called to difficult service. If they do not succeed, it will not be for want of courage and resolution. Superior force may possibly oblige

oblige them to return without accomplishing what they went for ; but I rather hope soon to hear, that they are in possession of *Fort-Frederick*.

I have nothing further to add at present, but that I am, without a compliment,

Your very good Friend

and humble Servant,

BOSTON, *August*
25th, 1755.

T. W.

P. S. You will probably gratify some private friends, by giving them the opportunity of perusing this letter. You may act your pleasure upon the matter : Nay, I object not against your making the letter public, if you should think it fitted to promote the public service.

T. W.

